
Trade Name Registration

What is a trade name?

A trade name is any name used in the course of business that does not include the full legal name of **all** the owners of the business.

In the case of a limited partnership or a corporation, it is any name that differs in **any** respect from the name registered with the Secretary of State (see example on reverse).

If you are using your personal name in your business name, you may or may not have to register. Please see the reverse for examples.

What is the purpose of trade name registration?

The trade name registration provides a record of all owners of a business. This information is provided to the public if requested.

Registering your trade name does not protect the name from use by others. The right to use a trade name belongs to the one who first uses it in connection with their business.

Information on trade name protection can be found in Chapter 19.80.010RCW; Chapter 130 Washington Laws, 1984; and the court case **Foss vs. Culberton**, 17 Wash.2d 610, 136 P.2d 711 (1943).

Why should I register my trade name?

You should register your trade name because if you do not do so, you cannot bring a lawsuit on behalf of your business. This means a lawsuit for any purpose, not just suits related to use of the business name.

How do I register my trade name?

Trade names are registered using the Master Application. Simply list each name you want to register in the Fees section on page one of the Master Application. There is a \$5 fee for each name you register.

How do I search to determine if a business name is available?

Master License Service has the most extensive state listing of business names. To request a search call 1-900-463-6000. The charge is \$4.95 for the first minute and \$.50 for each additional minute. You may also mail up to three name searches with a \$4.00 fee to:

Department of Licensing
Master License Service
PO Box 9048
Olympia WA 98507-9048

The Office of the Secretary of State's Trademark Division has corporation names, trademark and servicemarks that are registered in this state. Contact their office at (360) 753-7120.

The U.S. Patent and Trademark Office has federally reserved names at 1-800-786-9199 or at:
www.uspto.gov/

The Washington Department of Revenue state business records database at: www.dor.wa.gov

The Washington Labor and Industries has Building Contractor names at: www.lni.wa.gov

What do I do if I'm no longer using a trade name?

You can cancel a trade name by writing a letter requesting the cancellation and sending the letter to the address below. There is no charge for canceling a trade name.

Department of Licensing
Master License Service
PO Box 9034
Olympia WA 98507-9034



TRADE NAME EXAMPLES

Corporations/Limited Liability Companies/Limited Partnerships

Name Registered with Sec. of State	Possible Business Names	
	Do Not Need to Register	Do Need to Register
Ginger's Sweets Emporium, Inc.	Ginger's Sweets Emporium, Inc.	Ginger's Sweets Emporium Ginger's Sweets Ginger's Emporium Ginger's Sweets Emporium

Sole Proprietor Using Personal Name

Full Legal Name	Possible Business Names	
	Do Not Need to Register	Do Need to Register
John J. Jones	John J. Jones John J. Jones CPA John J. Jones Construction John J. Jones Enterprises	John Jones Johnny's Johnny Jones J.J.'s J.J. Jones Johnny Jones & Company Jones John J. Jones & Associates John's
Johnny Jones	Johnny Jones Johnny Jones CPA Johnny Jones Construction Johnny Jones Enterprises	John Jones Johnny's John J. Jones J.J.'s J.J. Jones Johnny Jones & Company Jones' Johnny Jones & Associates John's
J.J. Jones	J. J. Jones J. J. Jones, CPA J. J. Jones Construction J. J. Jones Enterprises	John Jones Johnny's John J. Jones J.J.'s Johnny Jones J.J. Jones & Company Jones' J.J. Jones & Associates John's

Partners Using Personal Names

Full Legal Name	Possible Business Names	
	Do Not Need to Register	Do Need to Register
Michael Smith & John Jones	Michael Smith & John Jones Michael Smith & John Jones, CPAs Michael Smith & John Jones Construction Michael Smith & John Jones Enterprises	Mike Smith & John Jones M. Smith & J. Jones Smith & Jones Michael & John M & J S & J Michael Smith , John Jones & Company Michael Smith, John Jones & Associates